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An Archaeological Overview

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Abstract

Between the third/ninth and fifth/eleventh centuries, Siraf was a leading participant in the network of maritime trade, which brought merchandise from Africa, India and the Far East to the markets of Western Asia. During this period, geographical writers described the fine houses of Siraf, the goods that passed through its bazaar and the extraordinary voyages of its ships.

Attracted by the possibility of increasing our Knowledge of the city and its activities, the British Institute of Persian Studies, with the support of the Iranian authorities, conducted seven seasons of excavations at Siraf between 1386/1966 and 1392/1973. These excavations revealed the city's largest mosque, a palace, a residential area, the bazaar and the potters' quarter. Other components of the city included a large building on the shore a monumental cemetery, both of which present problems of interpretation.

This overview provides an introduction to the archaeology of Siraf.